

For Your Information

FROM THE CITY MANAGER & STAFF
December 1, 2021

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE CITY OF CLEWISTON, AMERICA'S SWEETEST TOWN

Solid waste collection will remain on the regular schedule through the Christmas and New Year Holidays. Roll off bins will be placed throughout the community for residents to dispose of their Christmas debris. Please do not place construction debris, household garbage or yard clippings in these containers.

Dates to Remember

December 16, 2021 – Golf Course Advisory Board Meeting
December 20, 2021 – City Commission Meeting
December 23-24, 2021 – Christmas Holiday – City Offices Closed
December 31, 2021 – New Year's Day Holiday – City Offices Closed

Office of the City Manager:

Citizens, Business Owners & Other Interested Parties:

At the November 29, 2021 Commission workshop, management presented and the Commission discussed city administrative organizational changes. Upon the retirement of long time Public Works Director Sean Scheffler effective October 1, 2021, Public Utilities Director Danny Williams was designated as being responsible for both public works and public utilities functions. Since that time, management has refined a longer term plan for the transition which was discussed with the Commission during FY 2021-2022 budget deliberations prior to October 1st. The Commission was presented a number of recommended personnel and organizational document changes necessary to implement the transition including: job descriptions for the newly designated **Director of Operations** position which encompasses the combined roles of the public works and public utilities director positions, and for the new position of **City Engineer**. Also, recommended were several personnel classification & pay plan revisions to facilitate these changes and initiate actions to address modifications necessary as a result of the Florida Legislature's action to incrementally increase the state's minimum wage to \$15.00 per hour over a period of years. All these recommended actions will be considered for formal Commission approval at the upcoming December 20th regular meeting. If authorized, management and staff will begin the process of filling the new city engineer position as soon as possible, and implementing the other recommended changes.

Also, at the workshop, management updated the Commission on efforts to fill the police chief position beyond the current interim status. For background, when presenting a Commission workshop report on May 3, 2021, regarding the resignation of the former Chief effective June 1, 2021, management presented a preliminary plan of action for the Police Department that included filling the impending Chief's vacancy on an interim basis while addressing several important identified priorities for the department and its leadership going forward. Management contended then and continues to strongly believe that law enforcement services in Clewiston remains a top priority function of city government consistent with the city charter. At that time, management pledged to expeditiously fill the department leadership void and work in the interim to ensure that the staff was made well aware of their importance to the future of the Clewiston Police Department and their contributions were much appreciated. Further, with the staff and Commission's support, the public was assured that management and the Clewiston Police Department would work diligently to develop and retain public confidence in the provision of critical public safety services to the community without interruption during this transition period and beyond. Lastly, management's goal was to work collaboratively to develop and maintain positive working relationships with affiliate law enforcement agencies to support the Clewiston Police Department's efforts as necessary to achieve these priority goals into the future.

After considering available options both within and outside the department and having contact with qualified applicants expressing interest in serving as the interim Chief of Police, the appointment of internal candidate Sergeant Tom Lewis was announced and made effective on June 2, 2021. In the six month period since the interim Chief began his tenure, management is pleased to report that major progress on the stated priorities has been realized. Specifically, focus was made on wrapping up pending projects including: finalizing budget related matters as the city was in the middle of the annual budget process at the time; filling personnel vacancies that totaled a high of eight full-time and one part-time when the transition began; addressing more immediate organizational, facility & equipment related needs; and, implementing actions on pending policy and inter-agency cooperation considerations. A brief listing of specific accomplishments to date during the period for both the police department and its animal services division was presented to the Commission at the workshop.

Since May, a concerted effort has been undertaken for management to be even more actively engaged than the norm with the department in addressing established priorities to meet management's obligations and the Commission's expectations. This period has provided the opportunity to evaluate the department's performance under interim leadership before making an informed decision regarding filling the position on a longer term basis. Weighing all relevant factors and in consideration of acting in what is sincerely believed to be the overall best interest currently and into the foreseeable future of the City of Clewiston, its citizens and business interests as well as the personnel of the police department, it was my conclusion to appoint from within the department with interim Chief Tom Lewis officially being promoted to Chief of Police effective December 1, 2021.

In closing, I thank each of you for your continued support and interest in the City of Clewiston.

Randy Martin

Staff Reports

Community Development Director Travis Reese reports:

- Clewiston Fire Department hosted multiple grade school field trips at the Clewiston Fire Station teaching fire safety to our future leaders.
- Laliza Latin Café had their Grand Opening on Halloween Night.
- The vacant concrete plant (Hare Lumber & Ready Mix) has been acquired by Skyrise Properties Inc. with intentions to invest and reopen the facility.

Public Utilities Director Danny Williams (also responsible for Public Works) reports:

- **Facility Maintenance Activities:**
 - repaired three air conditioners,
 - repaired ice machine,
 - assisted with Homecoming parade preparations and made repairs to Judges' stand,
 - assisted with installation of Christmas decorations for our holiday season.
- **Street Division Activities:**
 - Staff continues to keep all of our green areas mowed and looking good.
 - Pothole repairs continue around town.
 - In addition: staff assisted with Veteran's Day ceremony preparations in the Civic Park,
 - installed chains in the concrete bollards at the HHD monument near the boat basin area,
 - returned shopping carts to local stores,
 - with aid from the city's water crew, made repairs to a failed culvert on W. Osceola Street and replaced twenty five feet of culvert pipe.
- **Solid Waste Activities:**
 - Our new back-up driver for the Commercial route is in training and working out fine.
 - Two new drivers have joined our crew and are being cross-trained for the residential routes.
- **Sports Field Activities:**
 - Fields are looking good and ready for play!
 - Two loads of clay were delivered to the complex and two more are on the way.
 - High School soccer season has begun, and the first games have been played at the Sugarland Sports Complex.
- **John Boy Auditorium Activities:**
 - The facility is fully booked for a steady flow of events throughout the holiday season.
 - Staff continues to keep the building clean and sanitized after each event. Repairs are made as needed.
- **Central Garage Activities:** Staff continues to keep up with the maintenance and repair demands for all city vehicles, despite the scarcity of parts for our legacy equipment.

Golf Course Director Robbie Rush reports:

- Get all information of what's happening at Clewiston Golf Course Facebook.

- Get on our E-mail list by going to the City of Clewiston Website. Go to the golf course division and at the bottom of the page you can sign-up on Constant Contact to receive Clewiston Golf Course information.
- Golf Shop Hours are 7:15am-5:00pm. The first tee time is 7:30am. Carts are due in at 5:45pm daily. The golf course is open 7 days a week. Tee Times are required. Golf Shop 863-983-1448
- Clewiston Golf Course has a driving range. The driving range has lights which means you can hit golf balls after (Night Time) hours. Tokens for the range ball machine can be purchased in the golf shop or the Clewiston Police Department after hours.
- Golf lessons are available at the club from PGA Professional Robbie Rush. Contact the golf shop at 863-983-1448.
- Rotary Club of Clewiston fielded 60 players for their annual golf fundraiser tournament to raise funds for providing scholarships to high school students. The tournament took place Saturday, November 20, 2021. It was their 33rd annual fundraiser tournament. Congratulations!!
- His Vision Our Hands Wegscheid Scramble to raise money for the elderly is scheduled for Saturday, December 4, 2021. It will be their 10th tournament.
- 2021 Gators vs World Tournament is scheduled for December 10-12, 2021.
- The Clewiston Golf Course Men's Club Championship is scheduled for December 18, 2021.

Code Enforcement Officer Debbie Clay reports:

Prohibited Accessory Structures in all Zoning Districts



City of Clewiston Ordinance

Sec. 110-526. - Accessory structures.

(g) Prohibited accessory buildings and structures.

The following are prohibited in all zoning districts for use as accessory structures:

- (1) Tents (when used longer than a two-week period) and frame-type structures covered with tarps or canopies.
- (2) No trucks of any type, truck trailer, or mobile homes.
- (3) Railroad cars, truck vans, converted mobile homes, trailers, recreational vehicles, bus bodies, vehicles and similar prefabricated items and structures originally built for purposes other than the storage of goods and materials.
- (4) Use of accessory storage buildings, structures or cargo containers for living purposes.
- (5) Shipping containers (except on a temporary basis on an active construction site).
- (6) A shipping container may be approved by the planning board for use in the Industrial District and Public District that otherwise meet all requirements of the district regulations, and:

- a. Building permit required if over 200 square feet;
 - b. Cannot be stacked;
 - c. Cannot contain advertising on exterior;
 - d. Must be maintained in good repair, painted a solid neutral color that blends with surrounding buildings;
 - e. The planning board may require screening from abutting properties and impose such other conditions that protect the character and aesthetics of the surrounding area;
 - f. The fire marshal shall have access to all containers to review contents for hazardous conditions.
- (7) Violations—Time to comply. All owners of property within the city shall have 120 days from the effective date of the ordinance from which this section is derived to bring the properties which currently contain accessory storage buildings that are in violation of the terms of section 110-526(g) into full compliance with section 110-526(g).

Our Code Enforcement personnel will begin focused enforcement in December 2021 on this ordinance as well as continued enforcement of all City of Clewiston Ordinances.

The complete City of Clewiston Ordinances are available online and may be accessed utilizing the City of Clewiston website: <https://www.clewiston-fl.gov/> or the Municode Library website: https://library.municode.com/fl/clewiston/codes/code_of_ordinances

If you have any questions about how to achieve/maintain compliance with this or any other City of Clewiston Ordinance, contact our office at 863-983-1454 extension 309 or Code Compliance Supervisor: debbie.mcneil@clewiston-fl.gov

Be a good neighbor...Help fight the blight

Library Director Natasha Hayes reports:

COVID-19 Continuation:

- **Operating Hours-**
 - Monday through Friday: 9 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
 - Saturday & Sunday: CLOSED
- The library continues to follow all CDC guidelines such as social distancing and recommending face masks to be worn while in the library, but masks are not required. If you have any questions, please call the library at 863-983-1493. Thank you for your understanding and patience during this time.
- It's that time of year again where the library comes alive with beautiful, handcrafted holiday pieces by our very own Green Thumb Garden Club. The ladies did an outstanding job with decorating the library for the season.
- Library staff provided ready reference assistance, circulation activities, computer assistance, and patrons programming, such as Crafternoon which was held on November 10th, Lego Club on November 18th, and two Nailed It programs on the 3rd and 15th for a grand total of 1,392 patrons being served.
- Please be sure to stop in, visit online, or call the library to learn about the variety of programs offered. We were very excited to launch the Anime Club this month. If you are interested in Anime and Manga, this is the place for you.

- Virtual programs have continued for all patrons. Programs vary monthly so be sure to check out our Facebook page to remain up to date on upcoming activities.
- The Hendry County Library Cooperative Board met on Thursday, November 18th at the Clewiston Library. The next Cooperative Meeting will be held on February 17th at Noon at the Barron Library.
- Did you know you can earn an accredited High School Diploma and a Career Certificate through Hendry County Libraries? There are still scholarships available from the State of Florida which allows residents the ability to earn their High School Diploma for free and from the comfort of their homes. To learn more about the program, including how to enroll and available scholarship opportunities, visit <http://www.hendrylibraries.org> or call the [Clewiston Public Library](#) at 863-983-1493.
- Needing a computer at home or a laptop to travel with? The Clewiston and Barron Libraries have partnered with Komputers for Kids which is able to provide you an entire desktop computer for as low as \$40 (tower, flat screen monitor, mouse, and keyboard included)-wifi card is available for only \$15 and laptops as low as \$75.00. Stop in at either branch to check the inventory that is available.
- Need a place to hold a meeting? What about a computer lab to host your organization's/company's training? The Clewiston Library offers a classroom and computer lab with a total of 16 computers for use. For more information or to secure the room, please stop in or call the library at any time.
- If you have not done so already, please join our Facebook page (Clewiston Public Library) in order to remain up to date on the library's events and programs.

Police Chief Tom Lewis reports: Police Department

On November 4, 2021, the police department welcomed a new Police Officer to the ranks. Curtis Mixon, a Clewiston resident, comes to us from Moore Haven Correctional Institution where he served as a Correctional Officer. Please join us in welcoming him as he protects his hometown.



On November 15, 2021, the police department welcomed another new Police Officer to the ranks. Ethan Rodriguez comes to us from Charlotte Correctional Institution where he served as a Correctional Officer. Ethan just returned home this month from a 12-month Army Reserve deployment at the Texas border. Please join us in welcoming him home and to the team.



On November 16, 2021, the police department held a Sergeant's promotional testing process. Officer candidates took part in the process which consisted of a written examination covering department policy, local ordinances, state law, and case law followed by a three-member interview panel. Please join us in congratulating our newest Sergeants, Tico Salgado and Tom Levins.

Animal Services

In the month of October 2021, Animal Services reported the intake of 84 cats and 40 dogs. There were a total of 52 animal-related calls-for-service in the month of October (32 outside the city limits). Animal Services issued 4 citations in the month of October (1 outside the city limits).

Animal Services is open seven days per week! We have changed the schedule to ensure that we have employees at the shelter every day, not only to care for the animals, but to increase the public's access to be reunited with pets or to come by and adopt. We encourage everyone to visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ClewistonAnimalControl>, where you can see the latest news and pictures of our four-legged friends.

Highlighted Training

During the week of November 8th, Commander Tito Nieves attended the FBI's Law Enforcement Executive Development training in Stuart, Florida. This command-level training is designed to better prepare law enforcement executives and future Chiefs for the changing environment. This is one more part of the police department's succession planning goals.

On November 17th, our newest officers received training in Human Trafficking from our partners at the Hendry County Sheriff's Office.

Other News

On November 4th and November 12th, West Side Elementary, East Side Elementary, and Central Elementary VPK classes visited the police department. Interim Chief Lewis and Paw Patrol Chase provided a Stranger-Danger presentation. The kids also were allowed to play with the patrol car siren.



On November 16, 2021, Interim Chief Lewis' *Coffee with the Chief* program was hosted by Hendry County Commissioner Ramon Iglesias at Roland and Mary Ann Martin's Marina. The program, which is coordinated through the Clewiston Chamber of Commerce, provides an opportunity for any member of the public to come and find out about the inner workings of the police department, get up to speed on current events, and ask any questions you may have in a relaxed conversational environment. A few folks in attendance will receive a mug with the program logo on it each month. We hope to see you there at the next one!



On November 16, 2021, Interim Chief Lewis presented the Clewiston High School Art Class with the police department's *Community Partnership Award* for their work at the department. We would like to extend a huge thank you to the parents, teachers, and mentors that helped shape these fine young men and women.



Tis' the season of giving and the Clewiston Police Department is prepping our sleigh! We are humbly requesting donations of unopened toys for boys and girls of all ages, so Santa and our officers can continue the tradition of riding around town and handing out gifts. The scheduled day of our joyful sleigh ride will be announced at a later date. Any donations can be taken the Police Department and are greatly appreciated. We are very excited and can't wait to see everyone!



Utilities Director Danny Williams reports:

- **Electric Crew Activities:**
 - repaired street lights,
 - installed new residential service,
 - set junction boxes in alley for underground commercial service,
 - replaced poles on Mississippi and Pasadena Avenues,
 - installed a new three phase transformer bank at school.
- **Water Sewer Crew Activities:**
 - repaired two 1" service line water breaks,
 - repaired Eastside School lift station pump .

- **Customer Service Department**

- Your Utility partners with customers to bring renewable power to the electric grid. If you'd like to learn more about net metering, please visit the FTC consumer information site at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0532-solar-power-your-home>.
- Please remember to register with CodeRed (Reverse 911). This system allows us to contact you in case of an emergency or with other informational announcements. You may register by clicking on the CodeRed link at the bottom of the City's website page www.clewiston-fl.gov. You may update your information at any time through the same link.
- If you are considering replacing your air conditioner or attic insulation, remember the City offers a rebate program for those items. Most local contractors participate in the program and can give you more information. You can also visit our website at www.clewiston-fl.gov or call our office.
- *IT'S LIGHTNING SEASON!* Don't forget to sign up for your meter based surge protection! Visit our office today.
- ONLINE BILL PAY IS AVAILABLE on our web site at www.clewiston-fl.gov or www.municipalonlinepayments.com/clewistonfl.